



# New Market Developer

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A Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Publication Linking You to the Potential of Overseas Markets

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[www.foodexport.org](http://www.foodexport.org) | [www.michigan.gov/agexport](http://www.michigan.gov/agexport) | [www.twitter.com/MIAgExport](http://www.twitter.com/MIAgExport) | [www.fas.usda.gov](http://www.fas.usda.gov)

## Opportunities Await Michigan Food and Agricultural Businesses in Brazil

Four Michigan companies traveled to Sao Paulo and Rio, Brazil March 4-8 to meet with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials and Brazilian companies to discuss export opportunities in Brazil. BelleHarvest, North Bay Produce, Graceland Fruit Inc., and the Michigan Apple Committee spent their time in country discussing the vast market potential for apples, dried fruit and various other fruits and vegetables grown and produced in Michigan. In addition to these meetings, Michigan companies were able to tour retail establishments to learn about consumer buying habits.

Brazil is already a solid export market for Michigan products as 2012 exports totaled \$11.5 million, and there is significant growth potential. Upcoming events such as the World Cup as well as the Olympics will likely boost sales and increase the demand for high quality Michigan products. RJ Simons of BelleHarvest Sales Inc. said, "In March I participated in a trade mission to Brazil. It was very informational and educational with an excellent itinerary. BelleHarvest Sales is excited about the export opportunities that were gained and we are currently working on plans to market some of our apples to consumers in South America. The trip was professional and well organized and I would like to thank the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for their efforts". For more information on exporting to the Brazilian market, [CLICK HERE](#).



*Left: Diane Smith, Executive Director of the Michigan Apple Committee and RJ Simons of BelleHarvest Sales Inc. tour a Brazilian market to learn about consumer buying habits.*

*Right: Eric Olshove of North Bay Produce discusses Michigan blueberries with a potential buyer.*



### Food Ingredients Buyers Mission at the Institute of Food Technologists Show

July 15-16, 2013

Chicago, IL

[Click Here For More Info](#)

### Focused Trade Mission to Brazil for Retail and Food Service Products

August 5-9, 2013

Sao Paulo, Brazil

[Click Here For More Info](#)

### Midwest Buyers Mission

Sept 30- Oct 3, 2013

Minnesota, Ohio, Illinois

[Click Here For More Info](#)

### Trade Mission to Mexico for Food Ingredients

August 13-15, 2013

Mexico City, Mexico

[Click Here For More Info](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

## You Tube Video: Your First Steps Toward Food & Ag Exporting in Michigan

A new video explaining the basics of exporting and the resources offered by the International Marketing Program is available on the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's YouTube channel, MIagriculture. This video gives a brief overview of exporting and features helpful insight from Michigan companies who have experienced success marketing their products abroad.

Follow this link to watch the short video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDi98iKo8cc>

## Database Updates

You may have recently received an e-mail from the International Marketing Program requesting you review and update your company profile information for our database. Your cooperation with this request is very important as it allows us to keep you informed about programs and services and ensures that we have the correct information for the online export directory at [www.michigan.gov/agexport](http://www.michigan.gov/agexport). This directory allows potential international buyers the ability to find information about your company and products

Please take a minute to review your information for accuracy, in particular ensuring the appropriate contact for your organization. If you have any questions please contact John Kelly at 517-373-2469 or [kellyj2@michigan.gov](mailto:kellyj2@michigan.gov).



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A closer look into  
markets and services

## Export Success: Your Company's Financial Health Matters

*Guest Column: We are excited to bring you a new series of guest columns offering further insight into the world of international trade. This article was written by Zara Smith, Technology Systems Manager at Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center.*

Michigan exporters assert financing challenges as a leading obstacle to growing export sales. To address this challenge, the Michigan State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) Program and the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (SBTDC) teamed up to offer a Fiscal Fitness Assessment for current and potential exporters. The assessment is conducted by the SBTDC Finance Specialists team. This team of highly trained accounting and/or ex-banking experts reviews your financial statements and provides actionable recommendations to get your financial house in order. They work hand in hand with your CFO or accountant to position your company for export success and potential financing. Depending on your needs, they may simply conduct a financial assessment and recommend next steps – or provide more in-depth assistance by preparing a loan package or investment proposal, and set up meetings with bankers or investors.

All information shared with the SBTDC is kept strictly confidential under Small Business Administration (SBA) guidelines. Once you start working with a Financial Specialist no business information will be shared with anyone outside the SBTDC without your written consent.

To find out if you can benefit from this service, take the brief self-assessment at: Financial Readiness Assessment for Exporters

If you would like to be contacted by a SBTDC Finance Specialist you can request assistance in the assessment, or contact Zara Smith, MI-SBTDC Export Team Liaison, at [smithlat@gvsu.edu](mailto:smithlat@gvsu.edu).



## Welcome Shannon

Shannon Long has joined the International Marketing Program as an intern for Food Export- Midwest. She will work on Food Export events including buyer's missions, trade missions and seminars. She will also work with Michigan food and agricultural companies who are interested in exporting and utilizing Food Export programs to increase international sales.



Shannon is currently a junior at Michigan State University where she is majoring in International Relations and Marketing, with a minor in Arabic language.

## Market Spotlight – Caribbean Gobbles up U.S. Ag-Exports at Record Levels

Despite the slow global economic recovery, the Caribbean region has remained a strong destination for U.S. food and agricultural exports, receiving a record \$1.4 billion worth of U.S. agriculture products in 2012.

Only 7 percent of the land area of the Caribbean islands is arable, and an even smaller percentage is actually used for farming. With little agriculture production of its own, the Caribbean depends heavily on imported food products, which presents a significant opportunity for U.S. exporters.

Value-added consumer-oriented products in particular have gained traction in the region. Snack foods, dairy products, poultry, and fruit and vegetable products and juices have seen some of the strongest export demand and growth. While overall economic strength in the Caribbean is heavily linked to the recession curtailed tourism sector, the hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) food service industries have maintained strength and seen strong investment over recent years which has presented opportunities for U.S. food exports targeting that sector. In general, Caribbean buyers rely heavily on consolidators, in particular those in South Florida, for shipment of mixed-container loads to local Caribbean ports. As a result, a crucial part of doing business with Caribbean importers, is building relationships with consolidators in South Florida.

For Michigan firms interested in exporting to the Caribbean Basin region MDARD's International Marketing Program recommends considering participating in the Food Export Association's Caribbean and Central American Buyers Mission for Retail and Food Service Products in Miami, from June 19-21. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. The Michigan Pavilion at the American Food and Beverage Show also offers an opportunity to meet thousands of buyers, many from the Caribbean, in Miami. This year's show will be held October 28-29, [CLICK HERE](#) for more information on this event or contact Jamie Zmitko-Somers at [zmitkoj@michigan.gov](mailto:zmitkoj@michigan.gov)

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Exporting Questions?  
Contact Jamie Zmitko-Somers at (517)241-3628  
or e-mail [zmitkoj@michigan.gov](mailto:zmitkoj@michigan.gov)

Newsletter suggestions?  
Contact Hannah Bollinger by e-mail at  
[BollingerH@michigan.gov](mailto:BollingerH@michigan.gov)

